

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	Reid Alternative Practice. AP-45-01-21
Proposed Implementation Date	07/01/2021
Proponent:	James and Lorraine Reid
Location:	S07, T21N, R25W, N2N2S2NW
County:	Sanders

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

James and Lorraine Reid are requesting to remove grand fir (GF) trees from the SMZ due to recent beetle activity in nearby trees. They also wish to remove mistletoe Douglas-fir trees from the SMZ and remove blown over trees from February windstorm that blew trees across stream. In addition, they want to operate equipment in the SMZ off existing roads and use a crossing of the class 2 stream to facilitate log removal from the area NW of the stream (See Attachment A-1).

Harvest would utilize existing roads within the SMZ to skid all trees to designated landings. Harvest methods would be ground based with a rubber tire skidder and excavator. Trees blown across stream would be picked up, fully suspended, and swung away from stream with an excavator. All limbs and slash produced from harvest activities would be removed from channel immediately.

The SMZ for these streams extends 50 from the channel for a total width of 200 feet given the streams parallel nature (See Attachment A-1). Disturbance would be minimized in the SMZ and channel of the Class 1 and 2 streams by conducting operations only during summer to ensure soil moistures are low and Class 2 stream is dewatered. The number of crossings would be limited to two. Any debris in crossing after skidding would be removed and crossing returned to as close to original condition as possible.

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED:

Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.

Neighboring landowners have been informed of the type and purpose of action.

2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:

No other government Agencies have jurisdiction.

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Action 1: Crossings of the Class 2 stream would be allowed after water quite flowing for the season. Crossings will be agreed to by the DNRC Service Forester prior to use. Trees would be skidded with the leading end suspended. Trees from the recent windstorm that blew across stream could be picked up, fully suspended, and swung away from the stream. Existing roads in the SMZ could be used to

skid logs to designated landings. All blown down trees, mistletoe infected DF and beetle infested GF could be harvested along with the mature, susceptible, adjacent GF. The less susceptible younger GF would be left. All healthy trees of other species would be left. Sub-merchantable trees and brush would be left except where necessary to facilitate stream crossing. All brush piles would be constructed outside of SMZ's.

No Action: No blowdown, beetle infested, mistletoe infected, or any other trees would be harvested in the SMZ. No stream crossings would be allowed.

III. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

- *RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.*
- *Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.*
- *Enter "NONE" if no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.*

4. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE:

Consider the presence of fragile, compactable or unstable soils. Identify unusual geologic features. Specify any special reclamation considerations. Identify any cumulative impacts to soils.

Soils are gravelly-silt-loam glacial deposits. Action 1 requires dry summer conditions that would minimize disturbance to soils and vegetation. No turning or spinning of wheels/tracks would be allowed in the SMZ. Straight in and straight out as much as is feasibly possible. No machines allowed closer than 15 feet to the OHWM on any stream unless using a designated crossing.

5. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION:

Identify important surface or groundwater resources. Consider the potential for violation of ambient water quality standards, drinking water maximum contaminant levels, or degradation of water quality. Identify cumulative effects to water resources.

The proposed action would cross a Class 2 stream at designated crossings. Alternative Practice would require that stream have no water while skidding occurs. All slash deposited in channel will be removed concurrent with logging. The stream channel is very rocky and there will be very little, if any impact to water quality. All other activities would occur off of existing roads. There is a small seep near the Class 2 stream that must be protected if it is evident at time of operations. No machines in any area with moss-covered ground.

6. AIR QUALITY:

What pollutants or particulate would be produced? Identify air quality regulations or zones (e.g. Class I air shed) the project would influence. Identify cumulative effects to air quality.

Project would involve minor amounts of slash burning. Slash from the whole logging operation will be treated during the fall open burn period. No significant impacts would occur.

7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY:

What changes would the action cause to vegetative communities? Consider rare plants or cover types that would be affected. Identify cumulative effects to vegetation.

No significant impacts. Action 1 alternative requires dry conditions to protect soil and vegetation within the SMZ.

Non-merch, brush and leave trees must be protected to the fullest extent possible.

8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS:

Consider substantial habitat values and use of the area by wildlife, birds or fish. Identify cumulative effects to fish and wildlife.

No significant impacts. Alternative Action 1 will improve the health of the timber stand and improve the overall habitat for wildlife.

9. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES:

Consider any federally listed threatened or endangered species or habitat identified in the project area. Determine effects to wetlands. Consider Sensitive Species or Species of special concern. Identify cumulative effects to these species and their habitat.

No significant impacts. Alternative Action 1 will likely have no impact on any Grizzly Bear, Bull Trout or Cutthroat Trout activity in the general area. The Class 1 stream is a perennial fish bearing stream.

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:

Identify and determine effects to historical, archaeological or paleontological resources.

None present.

11. AESTHETICS:

Determine if the project is located on a prominent topographic feature, or may be visible from populated or scenic areas. What level of noise, light or visual change would be produced? Identify cumulative effects to aesthetics.

No significant impacts. The proposed site will not be visible unless you walk up to it.

12. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY:

Determine the amount of limited resources the project would require. Identify other activities nearby that the project would affect. Identify cumulative effects to environmental resources.

No significant impacts.

13. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA:

List other studies, plans or projects on this tract. Determine cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of current private, state or federal actions in the analysis area, and from future proposed state actions in the analysis area that are under MEPA review (scoped) or permitting review by any state agency.

None are known.

IV. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>RESOURCES</i> potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.• Explain <i>POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS</i> following each resource heading.• Enter "NONE" if no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.

14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY:

Identify any health and safety risks posed by the project.

No significant impacts.

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:

Identify how the project would add to or alter these activities.

Timber harvest would provide additional logs, continuing industrial production in the Western Montana area.

16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT:

Estimate the number of jobs the project would create, move or eliminate. Identify cumulative effects to the employment market.

People are currently employed in the wood products industry in this region. Due to the relatively small size of this project, there will be no measurable cumulative impact from this proposed action on employment.

17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES:

Estimate tax revenue the project would create or eliminate. Identify cumulative effects to taxes and revenue.

Due to the relatively small size of this project, there will be no measurable effects cumulative impact from this proposed action on tax revenues.

18. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES:

Estimate increases in traffic and changes to traffic patterns. What changes would be needed to fire protection, police, schools, etc.? Identify cumulative effects of this and other projects on government services

Log trucks hauling to the mill would result in temporary traffic increase on Cedar Cr and Upper Lynch Cr. Rd. This increase is a normal contributor to the activities of the local community and industrial base and cannot be considered a new or increased source.

19. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS:

List State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, and other zoning or management plans, and identify how they would affect this project.

There are no Plans that would be impacted by this proposed activity.

20. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES:

Identify any wilderness or recreational areas nearby or access routes through this tract. Determine the effects of the project on recreational potential within the tract. Identify cumulative effects to recreational and wilderness activities.

Use is expected to remain the same following the project. Recreational areas and wilderness are not accessed through this tract.

21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING:

Estimate population changes and additional housing the project would require. Identify cumulative effects to population and housing.

NA

22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:

Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.

NA

23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:

How would the action affect any unique quality of the area?

NA

24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:

Estimate the return to the trust. Include appropriate economic analysis. Identify potential future uses for the analysis area other than existing management. Identify cumulative economic and social effects likely to occur as a result of the proposed action.

NA

**EA Checklist
Prepared By:**

Name: Nathan D. Cole

Date: 06/10/2021

Title: Plains Unit Service Forester

V. FINDING

25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:

The Action Alternative is selected for implementation.

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

After thorough review of this environmental analysis, the action alternative is found to meet all stated objectives without creating significant impacts. The No-Action Alternative does not meet the stated objectives, nor does it free existing conditions concerning forest health and increased risk of wildfire, both of which identified as issues in this document.

27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:☐

EIS

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More Detailed EA

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No Further Analysis

**EA Checklist
Approved By:**

Name: David M Olsen

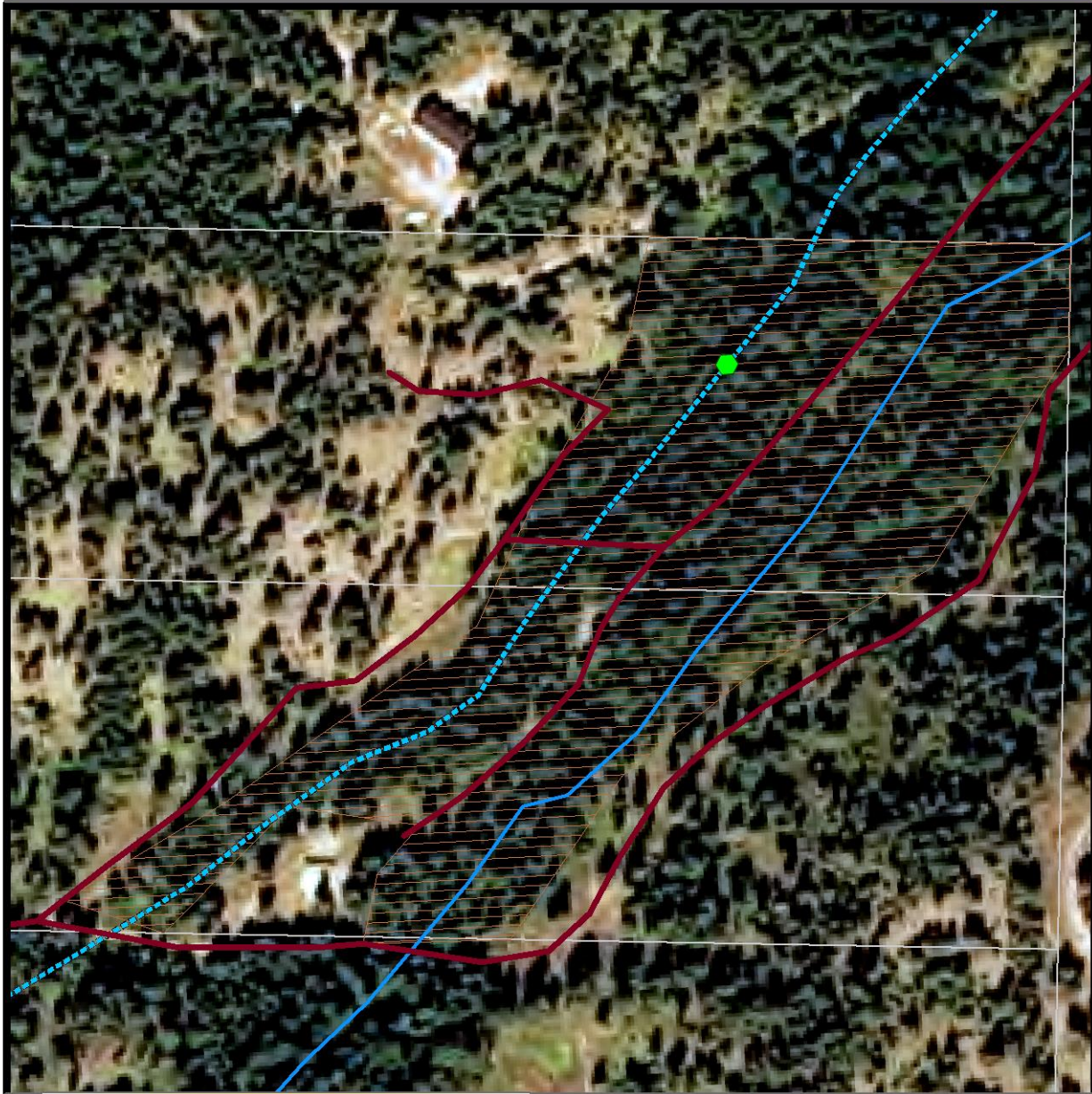
Title: Plains Unit Manager

Signature: *David M. Olsen*

Date: July 1, 2021

Reid Alternative Practice

N.C. 06/10/21



Legend

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------|
| Approximate Crossing location | Class1 |
| Roads | Harvest Area |
| Class 2 | Taxlots |

Montana DNRC
Northwestern Land Office
Service Forestry

